

Claims:

1. A method of optimizing a communication connection by providing a desktop with data for use in route selection.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said data includes a selection of available media for routing said communication connection.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein said data includes optimizing factors relating to each available media.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein said desktop is a computer associated with a communications terminal at a source end of said communication connection.
5. A method of selectively routing communication connections through diverse media comprising:  
providing a computer associated with a first end system;  
providing a lookup table in said computer, said lookup table storing a selection of media options for routing a communication connection to a second end system, said lookup table further including optimization factors and connection protocols for each media option; and  
accessing said lookup table to select a media for routing said connection based on said optimization factors.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein said diverse media is selected from the group consisting of a Wide Area Network (WAN), Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), Telephone over Cable, Virtual Private Network (VPN), Satellite and Wireless networks.
7. The method of claim 5 wherein said first and second end systems comprise telephone terminals.
8. The method of claim 7 wherein said communication is voice communication.

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9. The method of claim 5 wherein said first and second end systems include video terminals.
  10. The method of claim 5 wherein said lookup table includes dynamic and static optimization factors associated with each media option.
  11. The method as defined in claim 10 wherein said optimization factors are selected from the group consisting of tariffs, expense, latency, bandwidth and network load.
  12. The method of claim 5 further including the step of providing means to monitor a connection and to reroute the connection in the event another one of the media options can provide a better service.
  13. The method of claim 12 wherein said means monitors the connection at a set time after a connection has been set up.
  14. The method of claim 12 wherein said means monitors the connection on a periodic basis.
  15. The method of claim 11 wherein said connection is tested by sending a media file to a second end system and obtaining a comparison of the present connection with characteristics of said media file.
  16. The method of claim 15 wherein said end systems are for voice communication and said media file is an audio clip.
  17. The method of claim 15 wherein said end systems are for video communication and said media file is a video clip.

18. The method of claim 16 wherein said comparison sets an improvement level of a second media option with the current connection and a switch to a new media is made only if the difference in service exceeds the improvement level.
19. The method of claim 5 wherein said lookup table identifies a selected media for routing a connection based on the identity of the second end system.
20. A system for optimizing a communication connection between communication terminals, said system having a desktop associated with one terminal for storing route selection information.
21. A system as defined in claim 20 wherein said route selection information includes a selection of communication media available for routing said connection.
22. A system as defined in claim 20 wherein said route selection information includes optimization factors relating to each available communication media.
23. A system as defined in claim 21 wherein said route selection information is stored in lookup tables in said desktop.
24. A system for selectively routing communication connections between first and second end systems through diverse media comprising:  
computing means associated with said first end system;  
a look up table in said computing means, said lookup table storing a list of media options available for routing a communication connection from said first end system to said second end system and optimization factors and connection protocols for each listed media option; and  
accessing means to access said look up table to select one of said media options for routing a connection based on said optimization factors.

25. A system as defined in claim 24 wherein said diverse media includes a Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), a Wide Area Network (WAN), a Virtual Private Network (VPN) and a satellite transmission network.
26. A system as defined in claim 24 wherein said accessing means includes means to reroute a connection after initiation if a new connection better matching a users preferences becomes available.
27. A system as defined in claim 22 wherein said route selection information is stored in lookup tables in said desktop.

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